

Texas Gets the Plums

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Fortas



Marks



Deason



Akers

By Dom Bonafede
Of The Herald Tribune Staff

WASHINGTON.

In Texas they might well be singing, "The Eyes of Washington Are Upon You."

With increasing frequency during the last few months President Johnson has reached down into his native state and picked himself a government appointee. Not too surprisingly, the appointee more often than not has been an old personal or business friend.

With politics being a cut-and-slash rumble, the cry of "government by crony" inevitably will arise in the land.

Republican stalkers of Democratic prey filed away for future use an incident that occurred last week before the Senate Commerce Committee. Willard Deason, a longtime friend who was the President's roommate at Southwest State Texas College, was being examined on his fitness to become an Interstate Commerce Commissioner. Mr. Deason, who comes from the President's own city of Austin, was nominated for a vacancy on the commission by Mr. Johnson.

Under questioning by Sen. Winston Prouty, R., Vt., Mr. Deason acknowledged that he had no experience in the transportation field. Mr. Deason reported he is in the same business as the Johnson family. He is the owner radio station KVET in Austin.

Both Texas Senators, Ralph Yarborough, a Democrat, and John G. Tower, a Republican,

heaped praise on Mr. Deason, virtually assuring his approval as an ICC commissioner.

Mr. Deason is the latest of a group of friends tapped by the President for Federal jobs in what amounts to almost a reversal of form.

When Mr. Johnson moved into the Presidency after Dallas one of his first acts was to appeal to the high priests of the New Frontier to stay at their posts. Out of allegiance to their dead leader, most made the transition into the Great Society. Former Harvard Prof. Arthur Schlesinger Jr. was the first to leave. The nth exodus. On the not-too-distant day that Larry O'Brien and Richard Goodwin close the White House door

behind them and walk into the horizon, the New Frontier will truly belong to the historians.

To fill the vacuum, Mr. Johnson first showed little favoritism. He selected men from all corners of the country. It is to his credit that he did not, as his legion of half the Texans and put them on the U. S. payroll.

As one of his recent biographers observed, President Kennedy had trouble filling top-level posts because he was unacquainted with "the establishment" outside the world of politics. President Eisenhower was in worse shape, having spent all of his adult life among military types.

Earlier, Harry Truman was

accused of "government by crony," principally because of his appointment and association with Maj. Gen. Harry Vaughn, his military aide.

Knowing people from all sectors has not been one of President Johnson's problems. Furthermore, he had a reservoir left over from the Kennedy administration.

But about eight months ago, as the New Frontiersmen continued to drift out of Washington, Mr. Johnson found he had more jobs open than men to fill them. It was about then that he began to turn more and more to his friends.

Among his more recent appointments:

(Lloyd Hand, former presi-

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dent of the University of Texas student body, member of Mr. Johnson's Senatorial staff and California co-ordinator for the Johnson-Humphrey campaign, named State Department Chief of Protocol.

¶Marvin Watson, a Texas business executive, who was added to the White House staff as chief housekeeper overseeing the personnel and the President's schedule.

¶Adm. William F. Raburn, born in Decatur, Tex., and a friend of the President's for about 15 years, appointed director of the Central Intelligence Agency.

¶Edward A. Clark, an Austin lawyer and lobbyist, known for his flashy dress

and flamboyant character. Named U. S. Ambassador to Australia.

¶Leonard H. Marks, Washington lawyer whose firm represents the Johnson family radio-TV interests, selected as head of the U. S. Information Agency.

¶Shelden Cohen, President Johnson's personal tax layer, named commissioner of the Internal Revenue Service.

¶Robert Wood Akers, retired Beaumont, Tex., newspaper editor and personal friend of the Johnsons for 30 years, picked as deputy director of the U. S. Information Agency.

¶Abe Fortas, Washington lawyer, longtime friend, adviser and ex-officio assistant, appointed Justice of the U. S. Supreme Court.

At one time or another, four of the appointees—Messrs. Marks, Cohen, Clark and Fortas—all served the LBJ family interests.

Few of these recent appointees have been at their jobs long enough to be properly assessed. However, other friends of Mr. Johnson who have been serving in during his Presidency have performed admirably. These include Bill D. Moyers, press secretary and Chief confidante; Horace Busby, White House Cabinet co-ordinator; Jack Valenti, White House scheduling chief and the President's personal poet laureate, and Liz Carpenter, Mrs. Johnson's press secretary.

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